



State of Arizona
Department of Education

Tom Horne
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

MEMORANDUM

To: Superintendents
Special Education Directors
Charter School Administrators
Secure Care Facility Administrators

From: Colette Chapman
Deputy Associate Superintendent
Exceptional Student Services

Date: June 9, 2008

Re: Change in Annual Federal Special Education Child Count Date

34 CFR §300.641(a) states: *For purposes of the annual report required by section 618 of the Act and §300.640, the State and the Secretary of the Interior must count and report the number of children with disabilities receiving special education and related services on any date between October 1 and December 1 of each year.*

Historically, the ADE/ESS has utilized December 1st as the annual child count date. The ADE/ESS then submitted a preliminary count to OSEP on the February 1st due date and a final count once PEAs completed corrections in SAIS.

OSEP has changed its policy and states are no longer allowed to submit a **preliminary** count but must submit a **final** count by February 1st. Therefore, ADE/ESS must improve the accuracy of the February 1st submission to OSEP. Currently, there appears to be insufficient time between December 1st and February 1st to validate and finalize the Arizona numbers.

In an effort to improve accuracy and validity of the child count data, ADE/ESS has elected to change the child count date to October 1st, effective FY 2009 (SY 2008-2009). It is anticipated that by moving the child count date earlier in the year, PEAs will have more time to submit and clean up their SPED data in SAIS by the aforementioned due date thus giving ADE/ESS more accurate data to submit to OSEP.

By using an October 1st date, public education agencies (PEAs) will be expected to verify their October 1st SPED count by November 14, 2008 and reconcile SPED data in SAIS with verification counts by December 12, 2008 at 4:00 pm.

Please adhere to the deadlines specified above as failure to submit accurate data to OSEP may cause an interruption or reduction of Federal IDEA funds to the state, thereby causing an interruption or reduction in funds to each PEA. In addition, failure to meet the new deadlines may impact your PEA determination of compliance status.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the change to the federal child count date, please contact Peggy Staples at (602) 364-4024 or peggy.staples@azed.gov.

cc: Teddy Dumlao, Director of Operations Support, School Finance
Dorothy Wodraska, Program Specialist, Juvenile Justice Services Division
DeAnna Rowe, Executive Director, Charter School Board
Rebecca Gau, Vice President for Research and School Quality, Charter Schools Association
ESS Specialists
System Training and Response Team (STaR)
County Superintendents
County Jails